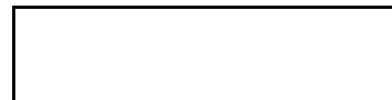




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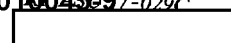
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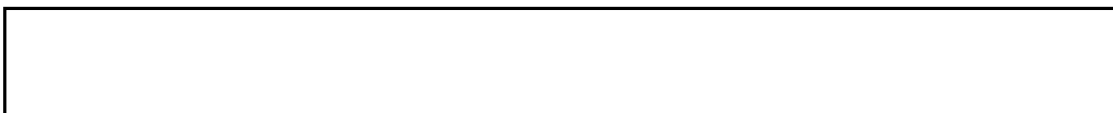
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USSR: Cement Imports From North Korea
Terminated 1



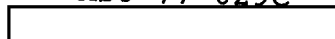
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Note: As a result of a reorganization, effective 11 October 1977, intelligence publications formerly issued by the Directorate of Intelligence and by the National Intelligence Officers are now being issued by the National Foreign Assessment Center. Publication covers and titles have been adjusted to reflect this change. This publication was formerly titled *The USSR Regional and Political Analysis*.



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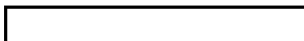
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USSR: Cement Imports from North Korea Terminated

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North Korea apparently has cut off shipment of cement to the Soviet Far East, causing local delays in Soviet construction activity and creating the potential for further economic disruptions.

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Despite the position of the USSR as the world's largest cement producer and exporter, the Soviet Far East traditionally has consumed more cement than it has produced. With the inordinately high cost of construction in the Far East and the proximity of North Korea, Moscow has preferred to import cement from North Korea than construct major cement plants in the Far East. Meanwhile, the cement producing regions in the European USSR have exported their excess to Eastern Europe and the LDCs.

The Korean cutoff occurs at a time when the Soviet cement industry has already fallen behind its annual production goal and will have difficulty making up this traditional deficit. Last year North Korean cement exports were cut in half, and gross Soviet cement exports dropped by 13 percent. The Korean action this year may cause additional problems for the Soviet economy. First, construction in the Far East and elsewhere will be delayed. Second, cement exports will be limited if cement produced in the western USSR is diverted to the Far East (imports from North Korea were 15 percent of total Soviet cement exports in 1975). Third, longer shipping distances will increase cement losses, inflate costs, and place a further burden on the transportation network. Finally, North Korean cement has represented an indirect energy import by the Soviet Union. Thus, an effort to boost domestic production of this energy-intensive product to make up for the Korean cutoff will raise the demand for energy at a time when all possible conservation measures are being investigated.

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